DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 355 169 SO 023 069

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TITLE	Planning and Managing Education: For What Ends?
INSTITUTION	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, Paris (France). Div. of Educational Policy and Planning.
REPORT NO	ED-90/CONF-401/COL-11; ED-90/CPA-401/DP-4/3
PUB DATE	Mar 90
NOTE	16p.; Paper presented at the UNESCO International Congress on Planning and Management of Educational Development (Mexico City, Mexico, March 26-30, 1990). For related documents, see ED 331 754-773.
AVAILABLE FROM	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, 7, Place de Fontenoy, 75700 Paris, France.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Developing Nations; Economic Development; Educational Administration; *Educational Development; Educational Improvement; Educational Objectives; *Educational Planning; Elementary Secondary Education; Foreign Countries; *International Education
IDENTIFIERS	UNESCO

ABSTRACT

In the 1950s and 1960s education came to be seen as a key element in the developmental process of countries. Many parties came to accept a direct correlation between education and the economic growth of nations. It was in this vein that many developing countries drastically increased their expenditures on education. This paper asks whether the poor nations of the world could justify this degree of spending on education. Rapid economic "development" has had numerous consequences for poor countries, many of which have been negative. Nevertheless, education can play and needs to play a constructive role in these societies and this is best achieved by creating an appropriate agenda for educational planners and administrators. This agenda should include such tasks as (1) clarification of the philosophy and goals of schooling; (2) change in curriculum, methods of teaching, and approaches to education; (3) reorganization of the educational system; and (4) reassessment of value systems. Education is a powerful force for creating the right information, shaping the attitudes, and developing the moral and intellectual fiber of youth. Education has the potential for change and this potential must be released. (DB)

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E.H. NEWTON

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PLANNING AND MANAGING EDUCATION

FOR WHAT ENDS ?

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Discussion Paper prepared for the International Congress
"Planning and Management of Educational Development"
(Mexico City, 26-30 March 1990)

Planning and Managing Education for What Ends?

From the late 1950s, education was seen as a key change agent in the developmental process of societies. Politicians, planners and scholars were persuaded that the development and progress of a nation depended on the kind and quality of education it provided for its citizens. Studies showed the caused relationships between education and development in the late 50s and 60s and education was accepted as a crucial agent for the rapid economic growth of nations. Even in the developed countries economists have concluded that expenditures for education constitute an investment with greater returns and greater contributions to growth than most other investments. Bownan and Anderson (1973) argued that a literacy rate of 40% or so was necessary but not sufficient for a sustained level of economic growth and that it required a rate of 70 or 80% for industrialization and further economic expansion. It was logical to conclude therefore that the less developed nations would make no progress unless greater provision of more adequate education was made. Consequently, recent decades have witnessed considerable increase in expenditures on education in both developed and developing countries. While the developing nations have been spending less in absolute figures than the developed nations, their unit costs of education as a percentage of GNP per capita are much greater.

The major question now is can the poor nations of the world continue this massive output on education? In recent years a number of factors have come together to cast doubt both on the wisdom of this policy and on the ability of che nations to pursue it. From the outset a number of writers and researchers have questioned the relationship between education and development and growth both at the social and individual levels. Increasing high levels of unemployment in countries where education had expanded led to questions being asked about the appropriateness of the education being offered. In 1961 Anderson analysing data from three industrialized societies concluded that

mobility independent of schooling occurs quite frequently. The factors that were important were ability and relevant motivation. Goodman (1974) argues that there is no correlation between school performance and life achievement in any of the professions and there is no advantage in years of schooling for such modest clerical, technological or semi-skilled factory jobs. He even suggested that the importance of functional literacy was much overplayed and stressed that what mattered was the attitude. He therefore questioned the purpose of schooling.

The direct relationship that existed in less-developed countries between years of schooling and occupational attainment is no longer very clear for with educational expansion the number of educated individuals has outstripped the abilities of the economy to absorb them. The increasing high levels of unemployment in less-developed countries where education has expanded has led to questions being asked about the contribution that education makes or can make to economic growth at the social and individual levels. It has been argued that education Western style exported to the developing nations has ill-served the man power needs of many of these countries. In short, as Fagerlind and Saha (1983) express it:

> In view of the increasing costs of education and of the competition for limited funds, the question of gains outweighing the costs becomes highly problematic. The inefficiency of schools, the wastage of human resources through unemployment, the frustrations of large segments of the population because of unemployment or underemployment and the demands of other sectors such as health, food and other human needs, suggests that if schooling is to make an optimum contribution to economic growth considerable improvement in efficiency and a rethinking of the structure must be made.
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> **(p. 78)**

The issue, however, is not simply a question of rethinking the structure of schooling. Before we get into the business of restructuring schooling to make it more efficient we need to ask, "for what ends?" Of greater significance, therefore, must be the need to clarify our thinking concerning the nature of development and the relationship between development and education.

It has to be recognized at the outset that development is complex in nature. It is multifaceted and multidimensional. It is all too facile to take one aspect of it and completely ignore the others and then gear our educational system to suit that which we choose to highlight. There has been a common tendency to see development in terms of economic growth and expansion and to manipulate the curriculum of the school to meet the goals and objectives that derived from this. Measures such as a Gross National Product, the number of vehicles on the roads, the frequency of supermarkets, malls and plazas constructed would then be used as indicators of development. It has, however, been recognized that this approach is often inaccurate and misleading and in any event ignores important social conditions in a country. There is no necessary relation between the level of economic growth and life conditions in a society. In many developing countries today we witness a proliferaiton of plazas and malls (designed to sell the goods of the developed world), as the economies continue to totter and the living conditions of the poor grow more and more intolerable.

More recently the focus has turned to the living conditions of the society as a measure of development. The extent to which a society provides and distributes the material and psycho-social necessities of life among its people is taken as an indication of its level of development. This approach takes us further along the road, but development is more than economic growth and life conditions. Development is concerned also with creating the just society in which no group, religious, ethnic, political, rich etc dominates another. It is

about protecting the natural environment in which we live and harnessing the natural resources for the general good of man. Development is creating a social environment nationally and internationally compatible with human worth and dignity.

Education is an integral part of development. There can therefore be no development without education. To attempt to isolate education and calculate its contribution to development compared to its' costs in this context then becomes a non issue. In any event it is a futile exercise because the variables are too many to control. Furthermore, there can be no suggestion that, because the direct relationship between education and development in some perspectives is not clear, educational opportunities should be curtailed or withdrawn. Education is a basic human right that cannot be denied any individual or group. Clearly ther is a price attached to education and that price becomes higher as education becomes more sophisticated. But the situation is no different with other more vital human needs - food, water, health - for which people are made to pay according to their situation.

What are the implications for the planning and management of education in this perspective where development and education are intimately integrated. It is assumed that the State which derives its authority and legitimacy from the people represents the common good and interest of all, and that education and schooling are organized to operate in the interest and for the benefit of the society as a whole. Educational planning decisions will therefore be rooted in the principles of equity, equality and justice, and concern both for the personal development of the individual and the general development of the State. Economic growth concerns will not predominate to the exclusion or detriment of other values embedded in the expoused concept of development. The philosphical bases of schooling and the curriculum of

the school will not be constantly battered by the demands and requirement of the economic and business community. Goodman (1969) argues that most technological know-how has to be learned on the job, in actual practice in factories and offices. He further contends that the technical competence required by skilled and semi-skilled workmen can be acquired in a short time on the job with no previous schooling. This probably overstates the case, for schooling I believe is necessary to prepare the groundwork for any training that will follow. The idea that schools should narrowly prepare the youth for the world of work will be re-examined. It will not require that schools provide the skills and competences for the work force. Rather it will demand that students be prepared to meet and deal with change, to be flexible, to think, to analyse and challenge the world around them; it will demand that they be socialized into the best human values, that they be helped to understand and appreciate humanity's common destiny and that they be helped to fully accept the dignity of all labour. In short, education will prepare the students for living via a curriculum that reflects as fully as possible the developmental needs of the society.

On the whole, many important planning decisions will have to be taken to ensure that a balance between the competing value positions in the development framework is maintained. It is only by planning that we can hope to control or even manage the many changes that are constantly occurring in our society and beyond. Planning will help us learn from and correct the defficiencies of the present and project more meaningful alternative futures. This will require the usual careful examination of the issues, data-gathering and analysis, goal setting and the establishing of priorities. Since, in developing countries, resources are seldom available to accomplish the desired goals and objectives, priorities reflecting the values and developmental needs of the society will have to be set up.

Good plans will depend for their proper implementation on good management. The management of the educational system generally and specifically of its various elements and agencies is therefore of crucial importance. Many plans have floundered because of inept management, mismanagement or indeed total lack of management. Good management implies effective leadership both to ensure that their plans are properly implemented and goals met and that limited resources, material, monetary and human are put to the proper and best possible use. In today's world participation and communication are key factors in working together for achievement. Management must make sure that participation is allowed and encouraged and that key actors know what is going on. Management must know how to handle change and must help others in the system to prepare for and manage change.

Given the perspective of education and development on which this paper is based, it is clear that much of educational planning and indeed of planning generally can be regarded as misguided and myopic. In our quest for economic growth, we have neglected or distorted those values and concerns on which our very existence depends. We have tended to abuse the natural environment and have failed to create and nurture an appropriate human and social environment. Developed nations have tended to exploit developing nations, transporting their ideas, values and systems at the expense of indigenous values and ideas, so that change and development have been exogenous and the dependency syndrome has been nurtured. We have so vocationalized, industralized and "technicalized" education that education for work has superseded education for living. Education for the all round development of the child to prepare him/her for responsible citizenship - always a nebulous concept but at least an ideal to strive after, to guide our educational efforts - has been replaced by training for the shop floor. Thus, not only is the quality of education at risk but the burden of costs for training has shifted from the world of business to the taxpayer.

It requires no more than a casual look at our world to see that all is not well. Though we have progressed technologically and modernized in many areas, we have not really develop, neither in the developed nor developing world. There is a long lists of social problems confronting us and mortgaging the future of humanity. Without going into details I simply record some of them for they are not new or unfamiliar problems. (1) Racism (2) Religious intolerance (3)Illegal drugs (4)AIDS (5)Terrorism - related to religion, ethnicity, drugs (6) Exploitation of women and minority groups (7)Illiteracy and lack of basic education (8) Pollution and destruction of the environment and (9) the debt problem. Back in 1974 Bundy looking at educational projects for the future described the situation in these words:

> We ... cannot think clearly about education and the future unless we understand the global drama which is unfolding. The power of our technology and the finiteness of our natural environment have combined to make this historic period decisive for all peoples on the earth. To give it the epic dimension it deserves: humanity is riding the apocalypse. A cross road has been reached with choices so fundamental and consequences so profound that every facet of human life, everywhere, will be affected. Viewed in this way, what we do in education today will set the course and shape the vision for many yet unborn generations. To speak of education, then, is to speak of the future of all humanity.
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> **(Incase and Olson p. 69)**

Though Bundy was clearly overly dramatic in his presentation of the situation the challenge he was throwing out to educators, planners of education and in deed to all thinking and responsible people is in no way diminished. It is even more urgent today. If ever we have been in a period of global crisis, it is now.

Confronted by the baffling and deadly disease AIDS, by a

devastating drug problem, financial and debt crisis, racial, religious and other social conflicts, by abuse and degradation of the environment by nations, large organisations and individuals greedy for material gain, by man's inhumanity to man as evidenced in vicious killings in both the developed and developing world, to name but a few, the future of humanity looks bleak. Now is the time for decisive action.

It is generally assumed that in times of crises there is no time for one to gather data and analyse it in order to consider and evaluate alternatives. I submit that this is quite wrong. It is precisely at such times that we need to have our goals and objectives clearly before us. The alternative may be panic and a complete loss of direction.

For those who have an interest in planning the educational futures of future generations the following questions to which serious answers both realistic and idealistic must be sought are an appropriate first step.

What kind of world do we want to live in, and pass on to the future generation?

How best can that world be created?
What is the role of schooling/education in creating and maintaining that world?
How must education/schooling be structured and operationalized to carry out that role?

If these questions are answered within the framework of development and education sketched in this paper then an agenda for planners might be as follows:

1. Clarification of the philosophy and goals of schooling. A major aim of education must be intellectual freedom rather than indoctrination

and standardized ways of seeing social reality. We must aim to educate for human brotherhood, and world citizenship, for tolerance and understanding of mankind based on knowledge of the world situation.

2. Change in curriculum, methods of teaching and approaches to evaluation. Currently held to encourage acceptance rather than challenge and exploration, to require the regurgitation of standardized knowledge rather than the creation of new knowledge and approaches, to foster parochialism rather than world loyalty and to maintain the status quo, they must be reformed to carry out the goals under 1 above.

3. Reorganization of the Educational System. Greater flexibility should be allowed by placing emphasis on individual rather than group development. The system should allow for backtracking and re-entry rather than compulsory attendance which creates alienation and anti-social behaviour and is wasteful of time and money - so crucial in developing countries. Integration of schooling with the physical and social environment will avoid the artificial separation of education and living, create better appreciation of both environments and foster more positive attitudes and respect for the importance of labour in its various forms, manual, mental and aesthetic, among other positive things.

4. Reassessment of value systems. We appear to be floundering in a world that has lost its sense of values. Permissiveness, egocentrism, greed and selfishness, 'freedom', lack of respect and cooperation seem to be the order of the day. Education must take up the challenge of reassessing and re-inserting the best of human values into our lives. We need to re-definite freedom. We need freedom to think and challenge materialism and consumerism, and the other social ills in our society. We do not need freedom from responsibility, from contributing to the development of our community from meaningful activity as we have tended to interpret freedom.

5. Moral, Emotional and Spiritual concerns.

These areas need to be brought back into our educational systems. The abuse and misuse of drugs, sexual promiscuity, the decline in the quality of human relationships, antisocial behaviour and lack of direction of many young people today all demand a place of dominance for these areas in our education system.

We must recognize that education cannot alone bring about desired changes, cannot avert social ills. Education, however is a powerful force for creating the right information, shaping the attitudes and developing the moral and intellectual fibre of the youth. Education has the potential for change and this potential must be released.

This agenda is universal and tentative rather than specific in its approach. It does not present new positions. It is no more perhaps then a re-statement in survival terms and a bringing together of often discussed positions not as a matter of choice but of necessity. It is intended to suggest that before we get down to planning in terms of long term, or medium term, before we consider available resources and the establishing of priorities, we need a master plan, a philosophical framework to guide us. Without this sort of broad backdrop our planning may well be pointless.

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U.W.I. 1989-11-17.